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RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 001345

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NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/WATERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/28/2017  
TAGS: KWBG PGOV KPAL IS PTER  
SUBJECT: NABLUS INCURSION: AT LEAST 12 PALESTINIANS  
ARRESTED, 8 IDF SOLDIERS INJURED

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) According to Palestinian security contacts and Arabic-language media, Nablus has been under curfew since 0330 local on June 28 when the IDF entered the city and clashed with Palestinian militants around the Old City, Rafidiya neighborhood and Balata Refugee Camp. Militants responded to the IDF with grenades, RPGs and explosive charges, injuring at least eight IDF soldiers thus far (two seriously). Palestinian and Israeli press report that the IDF arrested at least 12 Palestinians, seized multiple caches of pipe bombs, weapons and military equipment, and occupied several homes and the city's radio and television stations. Residents told Arabic-language media that the IDF broadcasted curfew orders using captured radio stations and surrounded the Rafidiya Hospital and several other medical clinics.

¶2. (SBU) The Fatah-aligned al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, Abu Ammar Brigades and the al-Baraq Army, and the PIJ al-Quds Brigades all told Palestinian press mid-day June 28 that they are fighting IDF infantry in several Nablus neighborhoods. Israeli media report that the IDF continues to operate inside Nablus to arrest wanted militants and eliminate terrorist equipment and infrastructure. As of 1500 local, the operation is ongoing.

¶3. (C) PA Prime Minister Salam Fayyad called the Consul General twice on June 28 to register concern about the IDF operation in Nablus. He noted that uncoordinated IDF actions such as this make it more difficult for the PASF to act against militias. "Such actions give the militants the excuse they need to hold onto their weapons," he said. He asked for the USG to register this point with the GoI and encourage immediate contacts between the two sides, including at the Ministerial level with MOI Yahya.

WALLES